

a problem along this stretch of the border, the Israeli military has reported a surge in smuggling of anti-aircraft missiles, anti-tank rockets and bomb components when Israel withdrew from Gaza in 2005.

There has also been a clear loss of progress made with regard to democracy and the rule of law in Egypt. Prominent members of parliament like Ayman Nour who have criticized the regime have been jailed. Nour was the leading opponent in Egypt's 2005 presidential race and was arrested on dubious charges shortly after that election.

According to Human Rights Watch, "Security forces and police routinely torture and mistreat detainees, particularly during interrogations. Torture in the past was used primarily against political dissidents, but in recent years it has been rife in police stations as well, affecting ordinary citizens." Cellphone videos posted on the Internet have shown the police sodomizing a bus driver with a broomstick and hanging a woman by her knees and wrists from a pole for questioning.

The United States has provided substantial help to Egypt over the years. For its part, Egypt should do more to control its border with Gaza and improve its record on democracy and the rule of law.

To that end, section 699 of H.R. 2764, as passed by the House of Representatives, requires the Secretary of State to certify that the Government of Egypt has taken "concrete and measurable" steps to stop the smuggling of arms into Gaza, improve the independence of the judiciary, and improve criminal procedures and due process rights. It conditions \$200 million of \$1.3 billion of fiscal year 2008 foreign military financing assistance on demonstration of that clear and measurable progress.

We note that between the date the House passed H.R. 2764 and final action by the Congress on this legislation, more than 3 months will have passed. Even more time will pass if it becomes necessary for the Senate to take up an omnibus appropriations act this fall. Consequently, there is plenty of time for Egypt to show progress in stopping arms flows to Hamas in Gaza and to reverse recent backsliding in democratic reforms before the U.S. Congress finalizes this legislation.

The amendment I offer with Senators LIEBERMAN, COLLINS and ENSIGN, and which I am pleased has been accepted unanimously, puts the Senate on the record stating unambiguously that Egypt must take clear and measurable steps to demonstrate progress on both reducing the flow of arms into Gaza as well as to undoing damage done to the rule of law and democracy.

As Congress moves toward enactment of this appropriations bill, it is imperative that support to Egypt be based on an evaluation of the performance of the Egyptian government since the initial House action. Congress must consider these results in determining what ap-

proach Congress should take regarding Egypt's foreign military financing aid during fiscal year 2008.

EXPLANATION OF "BY REQUEST" LEGISLATION

Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, I wish to speak about the meaning of "by request" legislation and more specifically about my continuation of a longstanding practice in the Veterans' Affairs Committee of the chairman introducing legislation at the request of the administration.

While I expect that those who deal regularly with the Veterans' Affairs Committee, such as the established veterans service organizations, understand the meaning of a bill introduced "by request," I have recently become aware that there are some veterans who are unfamiliar with this practice and who, therefore, have misinterpreted my recent introduction of certain "by request" legislation as support for the passage of the bills into law. This is not the case.

As our colleagues know, periodically the administration sends forward to the Congress legislation for consideration. Those measures that fall within the jurisdiction of the Veterans' Affairs Committee are referred by the Parliamentarian to our committee. In a tradition that began in the earliest days of the committee, the chairman, as a courtesy to the administration, introduces such bills on a "by request" basis. This is a courtesy that has generally been extended to every administration and by every chairman, regardless of the party affiliation of the administration or chairman, and one that I am pleased to continue.

When I introduce legislation "by request," I am taking no position on the legislation. In fact, I introduce such legislation without including any statement or explanatory materials. I do so for the express purpose of both accommodating the administration and ensuring that others are aware of the proposed legislation so that they might analyze it and, if they wish, comment upon it. As chairman, I am committed to the development of the best possible policy in the area of veterans issues and I firmly believe that this goal is most successfully achieved with the free exchange of ideas, not by stifling different points of view.

During this Congress, in accordance with this practice, I have introduced four "by request" bills, S. 1757, S. 2025, S. 2026, and S. 2027. It is one of these measures, S. 2026, relating to certain Agent Orange issues, that has generated the most confusion among some veterans. I hope that my explanation of "by request" legislation helps to clear up these misunderstandings.

I have taken no position on any of these four bills and simply introduced them as a professional courtesy to the administration. Indeed, at this point, I do not know whether these bills will receive consideration by the com-

mittee. For those who have views on some or all of these measures, I welcome your input. I ask that in providing your views you recognize that my introduction of "by request" legislation should not be interpreted as a reflection of my views on the content of any such bill.

NATIONAL PANCREATIC CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

Mr. SMITH. Mr. President, I am in support of S. Res. 222, a resolution that recognizes November as National Pancreatic Cancer Awareness Month. This resolution represents a way to educate communities across the Nation about pancreatic cancer and the need for increased research funding, early detection methods, and effective treatments and educational programs. I am pleased to be joining my colleague, Senator CLINTON, as the lead sponsor of this important measure.

Like many Americans, I have seen the ramifications of cancer firsthand. I support this resolution in honor and loving memory of the millions of Americans who have been diagnosed with pancreatic cancer and their families, and for my mother Jessica Udall Smith whom I lost to this killer.

Pancreatic cancer is hard to detect in its early stages as it doesn't cause symptoms right away. Also, because the pancreas is hidden behind other organs, health care providers cannot see or feel the tumors during routine exams. Because there are no early detection methods, pancreatic cancer often is found late and spreads quickly.

This year, more than 37,000 Americans will receive a diagnosis of pancreatic cancer and for over 33,000 of them their diagnosis will ultimately end in their death. While overall cancer death rates have declined, the number of people diagnosed with pancreatic cancer is increasing. It is projected that this year, 440 Oregonians will die from pancreatic cancer. That represents a 17 percent increase in pancreatic cancer deaths in Oregon over the last 3 to 4 years.

Pancreatic cancer has been forced into the national spotlight in recent weeks. On August 18, 2007, Michael Deaver, one of former President Ronald Reagan's closest advisers, succumbed to the disease at age 69. Just last week, famed opera singer Luciano Pavarotti died after a yearlong battle at age 71. Something that is striking about both of their cases is that despite their celebrity and contacts, neither man had much more than a fighting chance of overcoming this disease. There are simply no curative treatments—experimental or FDA approved—that currently are available to fight this disease, even when price is no object.

Individuals fighting pancreatic cancer continue to face discouragingly low odds of survival. In 1975, the 5-year survival rate for pancreatic cancer was 2 percent. Twenty-five years later, the survival rate remains at an unacceptably low level of 5 percent, making this cancer the fourth leading cause of cancer-related death. Indeed, pancreatic

cancer is considered the deadliest cancer, of which 75 percent of patients diagnosed with this disease die within the first year and most within the first 3 to 6 months. Early detection tools, such as those that currently are available for ovarian, colon, breast and prostate cancer, would make a significant impact on pancreatic cancer, but those tools require a new investment in basic scientific research at the National Cancer Institute, NCI.

I support biomedical research and the great promise it holds in the development of new treatments and possible cures for the many types of cancer, including pancreatic cancer. Past investments at the NCI have helped drive new discoveries that led to the decline in overall cancer deaths in the U.S. for the second consecutive year. Now is the time to expand our efforts in the fight against pancreatic cancer, but that will be impossible unless we find a way to secure more funding for the NCI.

The Pancreatic Cancer Awareness Network is a national organization that is working to comprehensively address the problem of pancreatic cancer by providing patient support, advancing research, and creating hope. I support their efforts to raise awareness of this disease and believe that it is important that we recognize November as National Pancreatic Cancer Awareness Month.

I ask my colleagues support this resolution, which will help increase research, education and awareness for pancreatic cancer.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

UNITED STATES NORTHERN COMMAND

• Mr. ALLARD. Mr. President, today I commemorate the fifth anniversary of U.S. Northern Command, located in Colorado Springs, CO. I take enormous pride in seeing the Colorado flag fly alongside the flags of the United States and Canada.

Officially, USNORTHCOM was established on October 1, 2002. However, it was the terrible events of September 11, 2001, that made the country realize its need for increased homeland defense. Within 13 months of 9/11, USNORTHCOM stood up as the combatant command charged with defending the homeland and providing military assistance to civil authorities.

Five years later, USNORTHCOM is proudly executing its missions of Homeland Defense and civil support operations to defend, protect, and secure the United States and its interests.

Since 9/11, our Nation has been engaged in a fight against terrorism on multiple fronts, including our homeland. As USNORTHCOM enters its fifth year, they are fully mission capable, prepared and ready to respond to the broad spectrum of homeland defense challenges that exist in today's dy-

namic security environment. USNORTHCOM is actively deterring threats from crossing our borders by closely working with other combatant commands, intelligence agencies and interagency partners to detect and defeat threats before they arrive in our homeland.

When it comes to rendering assistance to civil authorities, U.S. Northern Command is prepared to help. By anticipating threats, ranging from natural disasters to man-made, the command provides Department of Defense capabilities in a timely and coordinated fashion. Facilitated by Defense coordinating officers attached to every FEMA region, USNORTHCOM works side by side with its interagency partners to support the States and their emergency response teams when requested.

In its 5 short years of existence, USNORTHCOM has effectively responded to several catastrophes. They have been absolutely essential to saving lives while mitigating the suffering and losses experienced.

USNORTHCOM understands the multi-agency approach to defending our homeland and providing support to civil authorities. Therefore, it places a high priority on building and strengthening relationships with the States, territories, other government and non-government agencies, as well as partnering with our border nations, Canada and Mexico.

USNORTHCOM is also actively engaged with the National Guard, and serves as the combatant command advocate to provide the Guard with the tools and resources necessary to accomplish their mission. A committed, lasting partnership between U.S. Northern Command and the National Guard will strengthen our national defense and defy those attempting to sabotage our way of life.

Let me also recognize the unsung heroes of this command, the men and women of U.S. Northern Command. They are synonymous with homeland defense; they are a total force team of soldiers, sailors, airmen, marines and Coast Guardsmen from the active and Reserve Components of our military. The men and women of USNORTHCOM clearly understand the importance of their mission and carry out their responsibilities with a sense of urgency. Their pride in contributing to the defense of our great Nation is evident in every aspect of their operations.

To the men and women of U.S. Northern Command, I stand today to say: Thank you for your dedication and service to the United States of America. On the occasion of your fifth anniversary, I congratulate you for a job well done.●

RECOGNIZING DR. DAVID L. CHICOINE

• Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, today I recognize the momentous occasion of the inauguration of Dr. David L.

Chicoine as the 19th president of South Dakota State University.

South Dakota State University has a rich history of strong leadership dating back to the commitment of President George Lilley, who advanced \$500 of his own salary to finish three rooms in the first building on campus. President Chicoine joins Dr. Berg and Dr. Wagner to become only the third Jackrabbit to serve in this role.

The stage where Dr. Chicoine's inauguration will take place is evidence of SDSU's strong national presence, as 80 years ago this week Sylvan Theatre and the Lincoln Memorial Library were dedicated by President Calvin Coolidge. The pioneering research completed at SDSU is impacting lives around the world whether it be through improved agricultural practices, the ethanol in our gas tanks, the micro-waves that make our dinner, or the scoreboard at our favorite athletic event.

It is said that students come from the Sioux and Missouri, the Cheyenne and the Jim, and the Black Hills to study at SDSU. Students still come to Brookings from those places, but they also come from points around the globe and with knowledge and diploma in hand they impact communities in Brookings, in South Dakota, in neighboring states, and truly around the world. It is said that "You Can Go Anywhere from Here," and we celebrate that, in this case, one student has made the trip full circle.

Congratulations and best wishes to President Chicoine on a long and successful tenure at SDSU, and Go Jacks!●

HONORING PAUL TAVARES

• Mr. WHITEHOUSE. Mr. President, today I wish to pay tribute to a great Rhode Islander: my good friend, Paul Tavares.

This weekend, Paul will be honored by the Portuguese American Citizens Committee as its Person of the Year, and the PACC simply could not have made a better choice. This organization has contributed so much to the Portuguese community, and to our Ocean State, through its civic, charitable and political work. It is fitting that this weekend, the PACC will honor someone who has done the same. Paul's character, integrity, and honesty have set an example, not only in his work in public service, but throughout his life.

I have known Paul, and have been honored to call him my friend, since we both ran for statewide office in 1998: he for general treasurer, and I for attorney general. His motto during that election was simple one: "No tricks, no gimmicks, just a Treasurer who'll do what's right." We both fought hard battles and we both emerged victorious. And immediately after being sworn in, we began a close and very productive relationship that helped each of our offices work more efficiently. It has been a lasting and a valued friendship.